

# The Civic Green

## This Issue

How is Climate Change Affecting Morgan Hill? **P.1**

The Carbon Diet Club **P.1**

This Month's Green Living Tip **P.2**



Join A Carbon Diet Club Today!

### Go on a Carbon Diet!

Lose 5,000 pounds of carbon in just 30 days!

You can reduce your impact on climate change, save money, help sustain future generations and receive a free home energy analysis for participating in the program. The City's goal is to reduce personal carbon emissions

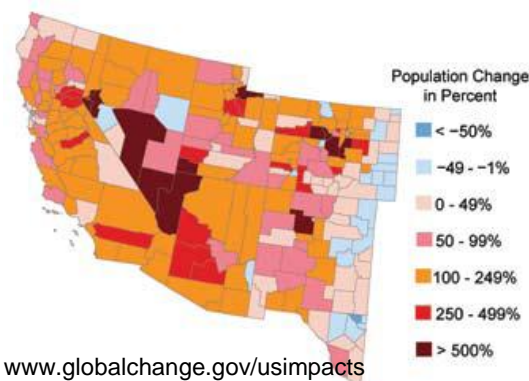


25-30% by the year 2020. That is a decrease of about 2% each year. With the help of the Carbon Diet Club and YOU, this goal can be met! As of June 2009, the program has helped Morgan Hill residents lose over 427,597 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions! By joining the Carbon Diet Club, you will learn how to reduce your

## How is Climate Change Affecting Morgan Hill?

The scientific theories of climate change from the greenhouse effect and human energy consumption have become increasingly accepted in the United States. However, even with science backing up these theories, people still do not see how closely climate change can affect their personal lives. According to ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), many changes related to climate change in the American Southwest are becoming increasingly evident. For example, the Southwest has been host to some of the most rapid warming in the nation. This warming has caused decreases in the amount of snowfall and related water supplies. With reductions in river flow, continued increases in temperature and rapid population growth, competition for water supplies will escalate. Since water is a vital resource for ecosystems, the human population, agriculture and even hydroelectric power, water shortages open

opportunities for conflict and economic turmoil. The current drought, for example, is expected to result in the loss of 80,000 jobs in California's Central Valley alone along with an overall economic loss of \$3 billion in 2009, according to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's press release on February 27, 2009.



[www.globalchange.gov/usimpacts](http://www.globalchange.gov/usimpacts)

Not only will drought occur with climate change, but substantial additional changes will influence the Southwestern landscape. Impacts of climate change could result in a decrease in biological diversity and could endanger protected lands, agricultural areas and rangelands. With current droughts even more severe than the previous natural droughts, destructive, record-setting wildfires have been occurring

greenhouse gas emissions with the help of tools, such as a workbook to record your progress, reusable shopping bags, shower timers, a free home energy analysis and much more. The Club meets two times during the month to discuss action items and to help every team member to reach their reduction goals. For more information, you can visit the City of Morgan Hill website at [www.morgan-hill.ca.gov](http://www.morgan-hill.ca.gov) (search under the Environmental Programs Department for Climate Change and Carbon Calculator to find the "Lose 5,000 Pounds in 30 Days" link). If you have any questions or would like to sign up for the Carbon Diet Club, call Rebecca Fotu at 778-6480 ext. 413 or email her at [rebecca.fotu@morganhill.ca.gov](mailto:rebecca.fotu@morganhill.ca.gov)



throughout the Southwest. These wildfires have the potential to not only threaten biological diversity and destroy land, but also jeopardize the lives of the many people living in this region.

With rapid landscape transformation due to wildfires and the resulting loss of vegetation, flood risk increases because the flood-buffering capacities of those areas are reduced. With less snow present on the base of high mountains and the increase of winter rain instead of snow, rapid run off from the tall mountains also causes a higher flood risk. Increased frequency and altered timing of floods will increase the hazards towards people, ecosystems and the earth's foundations.

With the projection of hotter, more intense heat waves, the demand for air conditioning will increase. These demands are expected to deplete energy supplies and even increase the

chance of brownouts and blackouts. California agriculture will also face some added risks from climate change because numerous crops such as artichokes, almonds, apricots, cherries, figs, walnuts, kiwis and olives all require a minimum time below a chilling temperature threshold during the winter season to confirm a fruit crop for the next year. Hotter summers and decreases in water availability are just some of the many effects of climate change that Morgan Hill has experienced in the recent past. Some of the policies and programs the City is working on to reduce its share of greenhouse gas emissions are the Green Building Ordinance 2009, the Carbon Diet Program (in this issue), Solar Energy on Public Facilities and developing Carbon Offset Programs. You can see the article in this issue on joining a Carbon Diet Club for more information. To learn more about these programs and others, you can visit the City's website at [www.morgan-hill.ca.gov](http://www.morgan-hill.ca.gov).

## This Month's Green Living Tip:

**Replace all of your incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient ones. (CFLs)**

Lighting contributes 10 to 15% of energy use in an average household. The normal incandescent light bulb converts only 5% of the energy it receives into light. Energy saving light bulbs, known as CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Lamps,) use 75% less energy than the standard light bulb



and last 10 times longer. A household could save \$30 for every light bulb switched. According to South Coast Solar, if every U.S. household replaced just one incandescent light bulb with a CFL, it would prevent 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. This is just one easy way to start living a more eco-friendly lifestyle.



17575 Peak Avenue  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
Phone: 408-778-6480  
Fax: 408-779-7236  
[www.morgan-hill.ca.gov](http://www.morgan-hill.ca.gov)